

PROGRAM ACTIVITY REPORT (PAR)



BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS IN WILDLIFE

The National Wildlife Disease Program was invited to give a presentation on bovine tuberculosis surveillance in wildlife at the United States and Mexico Bi-National Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Eradication Committee meeting in Nashville, Tennessee on January 31, 2012 held in conjunction with the Cattle Industry Convention.

The Bi-National Committee was formed in 1993 based on a USAHA resolution. It is composed of representatives from the beef and dairy industries as well as state and federal agencies from both countries. The original goal of the BNC was to make recommendations on the requirements necessary to import Mexican feeder cattle into the United States and to harmonize programs and standards between the two countries. Although tuberculosis initiated the development of the committee, brucellosis was soon added. The cattle fever tick committee meets in conjunction with the tuberculosis and brucellosis committee.

Wildlife is a reservoir for bovine tuberculosis in many countries. Traditionally in the United States, free ranging white-tailed deer were considered to be a "spillover" host for bovine tuberculosis, which means that

they can contract the disease when it exists in comingled livestock, but deer were not considered to be true reservoirs capable of maintaining the infection in the absence of infected livestock. In the mid-1990s, white-tailed deer were discovered to be a reservoir for bovine tuberculosis in Michigan. Approximately one decade later, a similar situation was discovered in Minnesota. However, wildlife surveillance in Minnesota demonstrated that the deer were acting as a spillover and not a reservoir host. The existence of wildlife hosts for bovine tuberculosis in Mexico has not been explored.

Dr. Gidlewski discussed the status of bovine tuberculosis in wildlife in the United States and Canada. He reviewed the situations in Michigan and Minnesota and introduced the USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services and Veterinary Services publication entitled "Guidelines for Surveillance of Bovine Tuberculosis in Wildlife" (http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/tuberculosis/index2.shtml).



Dr. Tom Gidlewski presenting on bovine tuberculosis in wildlife at the U.S./Mexico Bi-National Meeting in Nashville, TN

Ongoing discussion will determine feasibility, but participants consider surveillance during the next hunting season (Fall 2012) as a reasonable target. The National Wildlife Disease Program offered to assist Mexico in conducting wildlife tuberculosis surveillance.

For additional information, please contact Dr Thomas Gidlewski.

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The original artwork on this page was created by the National Wildlife Disease Program's Erika Kampe and Sarah Goff



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